

Message Text

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ACTION AID-20

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ADP-00 PC-15 USIA-15 IO-13 DODE-00 AGR-20

ACDA-19 INT-08 COME-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01

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R 241638Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY BAMAKO

TO USMISSION GENEVA

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 7737

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AFDROUGHT

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SWEL, ML

SUBJ: IMMEDIATE RELIEF MALI NOMADS

REF: GENEVA 4509

1. EMBASSY CONCERNED ABOUT PIERPONT'S COMMENT THAT "MALI RED CROSS ONLY ORGANIZATION MAKING ANY EFFECTIVE DISTRIBUTION TO DROUGHT STRICKEN POPULATION" AS WELL AS RECOMMENDATION THAT U.S. SHOULD AIRLIFT FOOD SUPPLIES TO MALI RED CROSS.

2. AS DEPARTMENT AWARE, GRAINS ARRIVING MALI FROM MANY COUNTRIES EACH WITH ITS OWN REQUIREMENT ABOUT SALE OR FREE DISTRIBUTION. FOR EXAMPLE, 15,000 MT U.S. SORGHUM PROVIDES FOR 25 PER CENT SALE TO COVER INTERNAL TRANSPORT COSTS SO THAT FACT SOME GRAIN SOLD NOT NECESSARILY INDICATION MISUSE. FACT IS THAT FREE DISTRIBUTIONS ARE BEING MADE SIXTH REGION BASED CONTINUING EYEWITNESS REPORTS EMBASSY OFFICERS. WRETCHED CONDITION NOMADS NOT RELATED MISUSE DONOR GRAINS BUT FACT THAT NOMADS COLLECT POPULATION CENTERS WHEN HERDS ARE GONE AND THEIR SITUATION ALREADY DESPERATE.

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3. EMBASSY HAS ADMITTED FROM OUTSET U.S. AIRLIFT THAT WE NOT

IN POSITION AUDIT GRAIN DISTRIBUTIONS SIXTH REGT, SO THAT ACCUSATIONS THIS KIND DIFFICULT TO COUNTER. RECENTLY CHARGE CAREFULLY QUESTIONED U.S. MISSIONARY RESIDENT TIMBUKTU WHO IS SOURCE SIMILAR STORIES THAT GRAIN NOT BEING DISTRIBUTED NOMADS. FIRST POINT MISSIONARY MADE WAS THAT "HE HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH NOMAD CAMP AND HAS ONLY VISITED CAMP ON ONE OR TWO OCCASIONS BRIEFLY" BUT THEN HE HINTED BROADLY THAT HE QUESTIONED WHETHER GRAIN BEING DISTRIBUTED PROPERLY WITHOUT SUPPLYING ANY FACTS BEYOND HIS OWN SUSPICIONS. BUT EVEN THIS MISSIONARY ADMITTED THAT ON RARE OCCASION WHEN HE VISITED CAMP POWDERED MILK WAS BEING DISTRIBUTED AS WELL AS GRAIN. THUS CHARGE WONDERS IF CRITICISM GOM GRAIN DISTRIBUTION NOT SOUR GRAPES ATTITUDE PART SOME PRIVATE DONORS WHO HAVE BEEN PROHIBITED CONTRIBUTE RELIEF EFFORT BY GOM.

4. PIERPONT'S RECOMMENDATION THAT U.S. AIRLIFT FOOD SUPPLIES TO MALI RED CROSS ABSOLUTELY UNFEASIBLE. GOM DROUGHT COORDINATOR MINISTER DEFENSE DOUKARA MADE THIS POINT CLEAR SEVERAL OCCASIONS THAT MEDICINES AND FOODS MUST BE DISTRIBUTED BY GOM THROUGH MEANS THEIR CHOOSING. IN ANY CASE THIS KIND OF ACCUSATION AND RECOMMENDATION SERVES NO USEFUL PURPOSE PRESENT SITUATION.

5. EMBASSY OFFICERS AND OTHERS WHO HAVE VISITED SIXTH REGION COME AWAY CONVINCED THAT U.S. AIRLIFT HAS BEEN CRUCIAL SURVIVAL MANY PEOPLE LAST THREE MONTHS. EMBASSY QUESTIONS CATEGORICAL STATEMENTS BY CASUAL OBSERVERS REGARDING GOM EFFORTS THIS ISOLATED AREA. EMBASSY AWARE THAT NOMADS NEED PRIMARILY PROTEIN ENRICHED FOOD BUT BELIEVE THAT VOLUNTARY AGENCY FOOD DISTRIBUTION AND MEDICAL TEAM WOULD BE USEFUL TIMBUKTU. UNFORTUNATELY, DROUGHT COORDINATOR HAS CONSISTENTLY TURNED DOWN THIS TYPE SUGGESTION IN SPITE CHARGE'S REPEATED EFFORT ENCOURAGE VOLAG EFFORT. GIVEN ATTITUDE REPRESENTED BY PIERPONT'S LETTER, EMBASSY NOT ENCOURAGED THAT LICROSS WOULD OPERATE EFFECTIVELY IN MALI WHERE OFFICIALS EXTREMELY SENSITIVE FOREIGN INTERVENTION EVEN BY WELL INTENTIONED AND COMPETENT DONORS. EMBASSY BELIEVES WE HAVE ONLY TWO CHOICES, PROVIDE HELP ON GOM TERMS OR NOT AT ALL. WE CAN SUGGEST ALTERNATIVES BUT WE CAN NOT DICTATE SOLUTIONS. KUNIHOLM

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